

Washington, D.C. - Congress has handed President George Bush the first veto override of his presidency.

Today, the Senate voted 79-14 to pass the vetoed bill Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), H.R. 1495. On Tuesday, the House voted to override the president's veto 361-54.

"President Bush is completely out of touch with the American public and the Congress they elected. With the president threatening to veto bills ranging from children's health care to ending the war to funding key domestic priorities, I hope this is the first of many times a bipartisan consensus in Congress successfully rejects his misguided priorities," said Welch after supporting the override Tuesday.

In addition to WRDA, President Bush has vetoed the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) reauthorization, stem cell research legislation, and legislation that would have required the withdrawal of troops from Iraq to begin by October. Until today, Republicans in Congress have blocked a presidential veto override.

"This legislation provides much-needed investments to protect our environment and improve our dams and other water infrastructure," Welch added. "By insisting that Army Corps projects go through transparent and rigorous review, we help assure worthy projects benefit the public, protect the environment, and save taxpayer dollars."

The WRDA bill authorizes nearly \$23 billion for the construction or study of water projects over the next 15 years by the Army Corps of Engineers, to enhance navigation systems, flood control, ecosystem restoration, and for other projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States.

The bill includes an amendment by Welch and House colleagues Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Thomas Petri (R-WI) to improve oversight of Army Corps of Engineers water infrastructure projects. The Blumenauer-Welch-Petri Amendment updates the Army Corps of Engineers principles and guidelines to help ensure that future projects are environmentally, structurally, and fiscally sound. The principles and guidelines have not been updated since 1983.